

so. When he is asked, what the virtue of this water of the abyss was, to dissolve all the earth, and at the same time preserve the shells? he says, that he never pretended that this water was a dissolvent; but that it is clear, by facts, that the earth has been dissolved and the shells preserved. When he is evidently shown that if he had no reason to give for, or facts to support, these phenomena, his system was useless, he said, we have only to imagine that, during the deluge, the force of gravity and the coherency of matter ceased on a sudden, and by this supposition the dissolution of the old world would be explained in a very easy and satisfactory manner. But, it was replied, if the power which holds the parts of matter united was suspended, why were not the shells dissolved as well as all the rest? Here he makes a discourse on the organization of shells and bones of animals, by which he pretends to prove that their texture being fibrous, and different from that of minerals, their power of cohesion was different also; after all, we have, says he, only to suppose that the power of gravity and cohesion did not entirely cease, but that it was only diminished sufficient to disunite all the parts of minerals, and not those of animals.